

"LEADING" BUSINESS MEN SERVE A USEFUL PURPOSE TO THOSE WHO LAUGH AT THEM

BY N. D. COCHRAN

I had a good laugh to myself when I picked up The Daily News last night and read this:

"Mr. Rosenwald's testimony came after some of Chicago's leading business men had appeared as witnesses before the body."

Others probably read that without getting a laugh out of it. They were so used to it that they didn't think anything of it, or see any significance in it. Yet it plainly illustrated the point of view of the writer; or the point of view of the business manager or publisher, which the writer felt he ought to take, as a matter of course.

That word "leading" is where the laugh comes in. I know bankers, for I have borrowed money from them. And I know that outside of banking and business most of them are so ignorant that it is painful; and that they don't lead in anything except money-making. That's their business.

The same is true of most business men, especially the successful ones. They get their nose in one rut and follow that rut until they die; and when they die, business and banking goes on, and there are mighty few people who miss them. Their money lives after them, but not many good deeds.

And when a real banker shows also that he is a real man, like John J. Mitchell for example, it is like a breath of pure, fresh air off Lake Michigan on a hot, sultry day in August.

I don't know Mitchell from a telegraph post, but I'll bet there's a whole lot of humanity in him. He was too big to quibble or lie or dodge questions asked him by the committee; and he wasn't under oath.

And judging from the testimony of all the "leading" business men, Mitchell was the only one of the whole bunch who had any elements of leadership in him aside from the genius of money-making; and I think money-making is a disease rather than a virtue.

The plain truth is that most newspapers think our richest business men are our "leading" business men. By that standard Julius Rosenwald would be a leader of leaders. Yet if there ever was a "leading" business man who had the mask of hypocrisy stripped from his face, that man is Julius Rosenwald, the public philanthropist and private slave-driver; the man (God save the mark) who pays hundreds of girls less than a living wage and gets his name in the papers and on the roll of philanthropists by handing out a small part of his enormous profits to charity and philanthropy.

From what little I know, Barratt O'Hara is a poor man and Julius Rosenwald is a multi-millionaire, but in a few short weeks Barratt O'Hara has done more for humanity with his courage than Julius Rosenwald, or a thousand Julius Rosenwalds, will do in a lifetime with all their millions, their charity and their philanthropy.

At that I imagine there is more good than bad in Julius Rosenwald. I imagine he is unhappy over this exposure of his smallness by the O'Hara committee. But it will bring out the good in him if he will only let it come out.

But Julius is like the rest of us humans. He is proud. He hates to admit that he was only a newspaper philanthropist. It grinds him to have the whole United States know that all the years he has been grandstanding with his millions, he was paying less than living wages to the men, women and children who slaved for him.

Yet Julius Rosenwald has been paraded by the newspapers up and